



FALL
07

OCTOBER 19, 2025

LESSON TEXT
Exodus 1-4

FOCUS VERSES
Exodus 3:13-14
¹³And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?
¹⁴And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

TRUTH ABOUT COVENANT
God heard Israel's cry for a deliverer and raised up Moses.

The Birth of Moses

I WILL
CRY OUT
TO GOD
IN TIMES
OF CRISIS.

COVENANT CONTEXT

This week we begin to explore the Book of Exodus, which picks up after the death of Joseph with God's people in Egyptian bondage. Our study of Exodus will reveal that God always has a plan to save His covenant people, pointing ahead in striking parallel to our new covenant.

SG *TEACHING OUTLINE*

Icebreaker: What crisis in your life has driven you to prayer and a desperate cry to God? How did He respond?

Teacher Tip: Connect the group's answers to set up the story of the children of Israel crying out to God while enslaved in Egypt.

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection.

I. CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE

A. Israel in Egypt

DISCUSS: *If you were an Israelite in Egypt during that time, what warning signs would have indicated to you that times were quickly changing?*

B. Enslaved in Egypt

DISCUSS: *What do you think it would have taken for Israel to cry out to God for His help? Why does it sometimes take us longer than it should to cry out to God?*

C. The Desperate Cry

D. I will cry out to the Lord when I need deliverance.

II. THE BIRTH AND LIFE OF MOSES

A. Moses' Childhood

DISCUSS: *What other stories in Scripture or Bible verses help you trust God in nearly impossible situations?*

B. Exile in the Desert

C. I will allow the Lord to work everything out in His way and in His timing.

DISCUSS: *What actions are you taking that may be forcing the will of God? How can you change your behaviors and patiently wait on Him?*

III. COVENANT NAME AND CALLING

A. The Burning Bush **V**

B. The Shepherd

DISCUSS: *Are you giving God excuses for why you cannot accept His call on your life? If so, what are they?*

C. Through faith in God, I will respond to God's call to live in covenant.

Internalizing the Message **I**

PRAYER FOCUS

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us understand He is waiting and listening for our cry
- For God to show His power and might as we begin to walk in covenant with Him

LESSON CONNECTION

In the closing days of World War II, Allied bombings of the munitions factories around Essen, Germany, became more and more frequent and fierce. When the air raid sirens sounded, armed guards would rush to bomb shelters, leaving the enslaved laborers (often Jewish and female) to huddle in the rubble and take their own chances.

On March 11, 1945, at the height of an endless bombardment, Elizabeth Roth and five companions decided to make their escape. They crept to the barbed wire surrounding the factory where they worked, crawled through a gap, and made their way across an empty field to a hill overlooking the town where they hoped to find a hiding place.

There, on the verge of freedom, one of the girls lost her nerve. She quietly turned back, recrossed the field, crawled back through the wire, and returned to the wreckage of the factory. The next day, along with five hundred other female workers, she was loaded onto a train and sent to Buchenwald to the gas chambers.

In recounting this story, William Manchester remarks, “It is a common phenomenon among escapees; the known, however ghastly, seems preferable to the unknown.”

“Who would do such a thing?” you might ask. “What sane person would make such a tragic decision?”

The answer is “we would.”

Like Elizabeth and her friends, we know what it’s like to be imprisoned in a broken world. We’ve been there, living amid the wreckage, cowering beneath the consequences of our own failure and surrounded by our shattered lives, ruined relationships, and failed hopes. Although we know its heartaches and pain, we are often more comfortable in that environment than in a place of freedom and hope. Many people are so used to their spiritual bondage, they do not even have a desire to cry for help. It often takes an escalation of our situation to bring us to the point of crying for deliverance. We must be careful we are not so content in our crisis that it stifles our cry for help. God sees our crisis but is waiting on us to make a decision and move forward asking for His help.

What about you . . . are you in a comfortable crisis? Has contentment stolen your cry? Do not continue to live enslaved by sin when God is simply waiting on your cry. His ears are open now, and His desire is to deliver you.

BIBLE LESSON

I. CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE

A. Israel in Egypt

Israel's story in Egypt began as a rescue. After those first few awkward encounters between Joseph and his brothers, the following years settled into a state of comfort. They were given the best land for their flocks and herds. Joseph's high status provided protection and prominence. They were blessed, fruitful, and lived comfortably. (See Exodus 1:7.) However, comfort is not necessarily an indicator we are living in covenant with God, but most of us prefer comfort over sacrifice. Abraham understood. The borders of the Promised Land were only limited by how much Abraham was willing to walk (Genesis 13:17). Since Egypt was outside those borders, Israel was away from their covenant land, although they were living rather comfortably. The Israelites were so at ease in Egypt, they never noticed when their comfort turned into crisis.

Exodus tells of Egypt's harsh treatment of Israel: "And they [the Egyptians] made their [the Israelites] lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour" (Exodus 1:14, emphasis added). Although they were enslaved, they did not yet cry out to God. God's covenant people seemed to silently bow beneath the taskmasters' whips. Although many former inmates live free and never return to incarceration, stories abound of inmates who reoffend when they are released because they were more familiar with living in custody than living free.

DISCUSS: *If you were an Israelite in Egypt during that time, what warning signs would have indicated to you that times were quickly changing?*

B. Enslaved in Egypt

However, as we have learned, the Jews considered land and children as signs they were blessed by God. Although they were enslaved hundreds of miles from their covenant land, they continued to multiply and bear children. In fact, they were so fruitful that the Egyptians were fearful they may take over. So, Pharaoh decreed the unthinkable. Exodus 1:15–22 describes a grisly horror no parent should ever endure: Pharaoh demanded the death of all Hebrew newborn boys. Even amid this widespread grief, the writer of Exodus did not record that the children of Israel cried out to their covenant God for help.

DISCUSS: *What do you think it would have taken for Israel to cry out to God for His help? Why does it sometimes take us longer than it should to cry out to God?*

C. The Desperate Cry

Strangely, thirty-one verses in our Bible come and go without one verse detailing one cry to God. Over forty years—an entire generation—passed before we come to the

cry God had been waiting on since Israel first set up camp in Egypt: “And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage” (Exodus 2:23). Israel had had enough, they cried out to God, and God heard them and remembered His covenant with them. He was about to set them free.

D. I will cry out to the Lord when I need deliverance.

The lyrics of an older song read, “If you’ve tried everything and everything has failed, try Jesus.” Perhaps the author did not know Jesus as he or she was trying “everything” to satisfy their soul or to salve their sorrow, but we don’t have to try everything before we try the Lord. Learn from the children of Israel in Egypt. Don’t allow thirty-one verses or forty years to come and go; don’t even allow forty minutes; cry out today to Jesus. He will hear and He will answer because we are in covenant with Him, and He always keeps His promises.

II. THE BIRTH AND LIFE OF MOSES

A. Moses’ Childhood

In the middle of Pharaoh’s diabolical edict to kill all the male children, two Israelites of the tribe of Levi—Amram and Jochebed—found themselves expecting their third child. Some may have callously asked them, “What does it matter if this child lives? You already have two other children, and one is a son.” However, the Bible is clear there was something special about this baby boy. Acts 7:20 in the English Standard Version states it in a wonderful way: “At this time Moses was born; and he was beautiful in God’s sight.”

Moses’ mother, Jochebed, realized he was special, and she hatched a plan to save him. She took a basket made of papyrus reeds, waterproofed it with tar and pitch (much like Noah’s ark), and laid her son in the basket. Then she gently laid the basket holding her baby boy along the reeds of the Nile River. Jochebed sent her daughter Miriam to make sure nothing happened to Miriam’s three-month-old brother.

As Miriam watched him float down the river, she noticed a group of ladies who had come to the river to bathe. One of those ladies was a princess in Egypt, one of Pharaoh’s daughters. Miriam watched and listened as the entourage picked up the basket, and Miriam heard her baby brother cry. He was still alive. One of the ladies remarked, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.” Miriam ran to the women and asked, “Would you like me to find a Hebrew nurse for this little baby?” And surprisingly, Pharaoh’s daughter said, “Yes.”

Miriam ran home, told her mother the story, and Pharaoh’s family paid Jochebed to nurse her own son while under federal protection. The one Pharaoh was so fearful would lead a revolt against him was under his protection and would soon be living in his own house. Only God could orchestrate such a reversal, but God was answering His covenant people’s cries for deliverance, and He was raising up this young man Moses to be their deliverer.

DISCUSS: *What other stories in Scripture or Bible verses help you trust God in nearly impossible situations?*

B. Exile in the Desert

Moses spent the formative years of his life raised as Egyptian royalty. He lived in the palace, ate at Pharaoh's table, and learned the language, customs, and beliefs of the Egyptian culture. However, all those influences were unable to destroy his true identity as an Israelite. The lessons his mother planted were deeply embedded in Moses' heart and mind. This knowledge led to an inner struggle that revealed itself in an outward action: Moses killed an Egyptian who was hurting an Israelite.

When Moses realized the Jews and Egyptians knew what he had done, he fled for his life into the desert. A polished prince ran out of Egypt into the desert and toward his destiny. He married, raised a family, and worked as a shepherd. This occupation was considered an abomination to the Egyptians. (See Genesis 46:34.) Moses, who still presented as an Egyptian according to his family by marriage (Exodus 2:19), found himself working in the lowest of occupations. He gave up his status for a shepherd's staff. Instead of a mighty deliverer, we find a depressed, defeated, and disillusioned man. But not for long.

C. I will allow the Lord to work everything out in His way and in His timing.

We often focus much of our prayers on finding the will of God for our lives. However, the timing of God is as important as knowing the will of God. Isaac was the promised seed, but Abraham and Sarah did not wait for God's timing; instead, they tried to force the will of God. Jesus was the promised "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," but His arrival had perfect timing. (See Galatians 4:4; Revelation 13:8.) Allowing God to work His perfect will in our lives includes patiently waiting on the fulfillment of His perfect timing. When we cry out to God for deliverance, let us wait patiently for God's perfect timing for it to come to pass. He will deliver according to His time.

DISCUSS: *What actions are you taking that may be forcing the will of God? How can you change your behaviors and patiently wait on Him?*

III. COVENANT NAME AND CALLING

A. The Burning Bush

On a day that seemed like any other, Moses was shepherding his father-in-law's sheep when he suddenly saw a miracle in the making: a burning bush that was not burning up. Then the miracle intensified. God called Moses by name and called him to lead God's covenant people out of Egyptian bondage and into the covenant land He had provided for them.

God's divine call to Moses frightened him. He was a wanted man in Egypt; he could not return there. And he certainly could not demand Pharaoh let God's people go. Moses would have done well to hide from Pharaoh; why would he seek Pharaoh out? Further, the people of Israel were not loyal to him because he was raised as an Egyptian, not

a Hebrew. This was all wrong. If it was to be all right, Moses needed assurances. He needed to know God’s name so he could share God’s name with the children of Israel.

God revealed His covenant name as I AM. “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:14). Moses needed God’s signature, and God gladly signed.

When declaring, “I AM THAT I AM,” God proclaimed He would be everything the Israelites needed and everything the Egyptian gods were not. In that holy moment, God revealed and affixed His covenant name, revealing Himself as the self-sufficient one who is always present, always working, and all powerful.

B. The Shepherd

Perhaps the last forty years were beginning to make sense. Moses had lived and worked as a shepherd, leading sheep from one pasture to another. That could not have been what his mother had in mind when she told him how special he was. Or could it? God was raising up a man who could lead His people out of Egypt and back to Canaan much like a shepherd leads sheep. Moses would no doubt apply some of the same principles he had learned to this new flock of more than a million Israelites. Although Moses felt woefully inadequate to the task, God would not accept his excuses because

V Moses was not going in his own power; he was going in the power of I AM. So are we.

DISCUSS: Are you giving God excuses for why you cannot accept His call on your life? If so, what are they?

C. Through faith in God, I will respond to God’s call to live in covenant.

We are not that different from Moses. All of us are called by God to live in covenant with Him. Further, we are called by God to lead people closer to Him and what He has for them. Each of us could present our armload of excuses to God, but He already knows them because He already knows us. And He knows we are not trusting in our own power; we are trusting in His. God is just waiting on your response to His invitation to live and serve in covenant with Him. When we say yes, we will become the conduit for the I AM to reveal who He is to our world. Like the Israelites, we will walk in a new freedom and protection as we respond to His holy invitation to live in covenant relationship with Him.

Teacher Option: Tell the story below or share one of your own to illustrate how our God hears our cry and responds to us because He loves us.

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

On a cold October evening in the nation of Uganda, Enoch was walking with his friend along the road when they heard a cry. At first, they thought it was a cat since the sound was coming from a drainage pipe running beside a waste pile. However, the longer they listened, they realized they were hearing a baby crying. They didn't want to be charged with hurting a child, so they each ran in different directions—Enoch to get his mother and his friend to the nearest store.

When Enoch and his mother, Gladys, returned, they found a baby in a plastic bag, which had been pushed to the edge by the trash. They did their best to comfort the child while rushing to the local police station for help. However, all the resources of the police's family unit were closed, and they asked Gladys if she could keep the baby overnight. Returning home with the baby, Gladys cared for her by washing, feeding, and holding her against her chest all night long to warm her little body.

In the morning, Gladys made a second attempt to surrender the baby to the family unit of the local police, but she had learned the person she needed to talk to was in another town. Again Gladys was

asked to continue to care for the child. A week later, Gladys returned for a third time to the police station, where she was asked if she would be willing to foster and adopt this child. Her heart leaped for joy. Without hesitation, she answered, "I wanted nothing less than to take her with me; I was not going to let her be abandoned a second time." Gladys and her husband, along with their four additional children, adopted the baby, naming her Miracle.

We are much like Miracle. We do not realize we are in a crisis until we find ourselves abandoned and alone. Miracle could do nothing to help herself except cry. She did not have the ability to free or save herself; she needed someone to rescue her. Her consistent cry caught the attention of someone who wanted to and was able to help.

No matter what you are facing, God is always listening. Do not be ashamed that you cannot save yourself. Do not worry about how loud or how long you need to cry. Your cry is crucial to your salvation. God is listening, and He will pick you up, clean you up, and adopt you. Your hope is waiting; you just need to be willing to cry out to Him. **I**